

International Strategy 2015/16 - 2020/21

1. Context

- 1.1. The next five-year iteration of the international strategy continues to support Brookes' strategic goal of being a *'university dedicated to improving the human condition in Oxfordshire and around the world'* ('Our Strategy for 2020').
- 1.2. This strategic goal is further articulated through the expectation that the university will *'develop mutually beneficial partnerships to facilitate the application of the university's education, research, and knowledge transfer nationally and internationally and to prepare the university's graduates to be engaged global citizens'* ('Our Strategy for 2020').
- 1.3. In addition, this strategy will embrace our values as an institution and align with other university strategies, in particular those supporting the student & staff experience and research & knowledge exchange.
- 1.4. The 2011-15 international(isation) strategy had the strategic goal of making *'the University a wholly international community with an internationalised culture and curriculum'*. In addition to the primary objective of creating an international ethos underpinning *'the experience of students at Brookes'*, the existing strategy also took first steps to focus on externally oriented activities and engagement. These included the development of a wider transnational education (TNE) engagement process, fostering cross university awareness of international research & knowledge exchange activity and the creation of a more effective global alumni network.
- 1.5. During the lifetime of the existing strategy it has however become apparent that there have been major shifts in the international environment in which the university operates, most notably the increasing competitiveness and often unpredictability of student (and staff) recruitment markets. Such factors will be taken into account in this next iteration of the strategy, not least because a) many peer and competitive HE institutions have already begun to respond to that changing environment with demonstrable success and b) the UK's own position in respect of international markets may be subject to change during the period of the strategy (e.g. visa restrictions, EU referendum, etc.).
- 1.6. 'Internationalisation' of Brookes will therefore continue as an essential element of the university's development and ability to compete effectively in global markets. However, this ethos needs to be reflected not simply in any international strategy but equally strongly as a continuous theme in contiguous strategies such as that for Student Experience (SESE) and for Research and Knowledge Exchange so as to reflect the goal of *'a wholly international community with an internationalised culture and curriculum'* (see 1.3 above). For the purposes of this strategy this will be referred to as a 'complementary objective'
- 1.7. As an example, the complementary objective will be pursued through the SESE ensuring that internationalisation will continue to be embedded into curricular and co-curricular activities such as the inclusive practices PESE2 projects or the key aim of developing *'a challenging, relevant and internationalised curriculum'*. In this way ISG will be assured that internationalisation will continue to be led through implementation of the SESE2.
- 1.8. The dynamic of the international environment and the desirability of a sharply defined approach thus dictate that the primary focus of the latest strategy will be more on the

development of the university's external, international presence and profile in its targeted markets than hitherto.

2. Overall Goal of the international strategy 2015/16-2020/21

To develop Brookes' worldwide presence and profile as a university that is international in its mission and outlook making a difference wherever it operates in the world.

We will achieve this by:

- a. Recruiting students from across the world who, as graduates of Oxford Brookes University, will be fully prepared to become active citizens in local, national and international contexts.
- b. Developing mutually beneficial institutional partnerships to facilitate the national and international application of the university's education, research and knowledge exchange.
- c. Informing the aims of the international strategy through the contextual application of the university's guiding principles of connectedness, confidence, enterprising creativity and generosity of spirit.

3. Strategic Objectives

- 3.1. Two primary and one complementary linked strategic objectives are proposed (*see schematic in accompanying support documentation*). These objectives support the strategic goal articulated above; they build on progress already made in certain aspects of the existing strategy but also respond to significant changes in the external environment.

Strategic Objective 1:

Secure and increase Brookes' share of the international student recruitment market.

Strategic Objective 2:

Establish a defined number of international strategic partnerships that operate across the university and support the University's development of a worldwide presence in as many areas of its operation as feasible (such as teaching, research, knowledge exchange, commercial engagement, etc.).

Complementary Objective:

To continue to enhance the international student experience and internationalisation within the policies and practices of the University.

- 3.2. Working towards objectives 1 and 2 will initiate the development of the university's external, international presence and profile in its targeted markets.

- 3.3. These objectives have been informed by discussions at University Senior Management Conferences (May & November 2015) and iterative consultation by Faculty and Directorate representation at the International Steering Group.

4. Supporting the strategic objectives (*see supporting documentation for operational detail*)

Objective 1: Secure and increase Brookes' share of the international student recruitment market

1. We will initially secure our market share of on-campus international student numbers (against a declining trend) in the first two years of this strategy. We will then aim to grow numbers by 1-2% per year thereafter in order to increase market share.
2. We will recruit appropriately qualified students to a diverse range of programmes across all four Faculties and OBI.
3. We will recruit from as diverse a range of markets as possible, thereby ensuring that the risks posed by market fluctuation are spread. Resources will be concentrated on recruiting from countries that demonstrate the potential to provide the best return on investment for the University.
4. We will build a sustainable long-term presence in key markets, including the establishment of in-country offices, with relationship marketing being central to our approach. Partnerships and alumni relations will be an integral part of achieving this goal. OBI will provide strategic and operational leadership to the University in international marketing and recruitment.
5. We will annually review and, where appropriate, more effectively reallocate resource deployed against international student recruitment activity.
6. We will draw on comprehensive internal and external research and develop appropriate marketing and recruitment strategies in target markets identified as currently or potentially of significant value for the University.
7. We will clarify the structures, roles and communication links for international recruitment activity within and between Faculties, OBI and Marketing .
8. We will develop a framework to support a greater university wide understanding of, and engagement in, international recruitment.

Objective 2: Establish a defined number of international strategic partnerships that operate both across the university and in as many of our areas of operation as feasible.

1. We will increase cross-faculty international partnerships. We will seek to establish up to four multi-disciplinary, cross-University international partnerships over the next five years.
2. We will endeavour to grow the number of international partnerships within markets in which we have already been active and have partnership potential.
3. We will seek to increase the accessibility of our programmes through in-country collaborative provision and other models of delivery.
4. We will maintain our reputation for delivery of high quality learning and teaching through building on our proven quality assurance procedures.
5. We will further develop and extend international research partnerships as outlined in the parallel Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2015/16- 2020/21.
6. We will increase international partnerships with industry and commerce, in addition to HEIs, through for example building and strengthening international alumni hubs.
7. We will increase our global impact through working directly on projects (short, medium and long term) that have direct links to communities in specified regions.
8. We will maintain a rigorous approach towards due diligence and liaison.

9. We will ensure that staff with liaison responsibilities will have undertaken the necessary professional development and receive recognition for their liaison role.
10. We will maintain, review and develop, cross-university partnership activity in Faculties and Directorates.
11. We will further existing international strategy project work (ISP01) to:
 - develop protocols and procedures for engaging with, and subsequently maintaining strategic partnerships;
 - establish partnership selection criteria such as: geography; partner status and structure; range of activities to be considered (e.g. from progression agreement through programme portfolio and/or research collaboration to commercial ventures); optimum number of Brookes faculties to be engaged.

Note: The 'cross-university approach' does not preclude local development of one-to-one partnerships at faculty (or indeed directorate) level where they might prove beneficial to the faculty/directorate or wider university (i.e. commercially, reputationally and/or developmentally - as per LPAG's *Criteria for International Partnerships*, 2013).

Complementary Objective:

To continue the enhancement of the international student experience and internationalisation within the policies and practices of the University

The International Steering Group will ensure it maintains its existing links to all the strategies feeding into this aspiration, primarily the Strategy for Enhancing the Student Experience (SESE) and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy. (see 1.6 & 1.7):

5. Operational Implications (*see supporting documentation*)

- 5.1. The International Steering Group is tasked with implementing the new strategy and will oversee the development of an operational plan. Currently a project management and project group system is in place designed to achieve the goals of the internationalisation strategy 2011-2015. Whilst appropriate for that context, the systems and structural changes implicit in the proposed new objectives may require a fresh approach.
- 5.2. The more focussed strategy also provides greater clarity of sponsorship and senior ownership roles for each of its separate elements i.e. international strategic partnerships (PVCGRP); international marketing & recruitment (PVC-D portfolio), complementary objectives (PVCSE, PVCGRP, Head of UK Partnerships.).

6. Evaluation of Strategy

- 6.1. The International Steering Group has the remit for oversight of both the development of the strategy and definition of measures of effectiveness.